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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/904,794	07/12/2001	Robert J. Germick	5468	1785

7590 08/26/2003
John A. O'Toole, Esq.
P.O. Box 1113
Minneapolis, MN 55440

EXAMINER

WEINSTEIN, STEVEN L

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER
1761

DATE MAILED: 08/26/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	09/904,794	Applicant(s)	GERMICK ET AL
Examiner	S. WEINSTEIN	Group Art Unit	1761

MN

—The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet beneath the correspondence address—

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, such period shall, by default, expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____

This action is FINAL.

Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quayle, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

Claim(s) 1-7, 10-29, 31 is/are pending in the application.

Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

Claim(s) 1-7, 10-29, 31 are subject to restriction or election requirement

Application Papers

The proposed drawing correction, filed on _____ is approved disapproved.

The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner

The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d)

Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 (a)-(d).

All Some* None of the:

Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____

Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received
in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a))

*Certified copies not received: _____

Attachment(s)

Information Disclosure Statement(s), PTO-1449, Paper No(s). _____ Interview Summary, PTO-413

Notice of Reference(s) Cited, PTO-892 Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152

Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948 Other _____

Office Action Summary

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

Group I, claims 1-7 and 10, drawn to a manifold classifiable in class 141.

Group II, claims 11-20, drawn to an apparatus classifiable in class 53.

Group III, claims 21-29 and 31, drawn to a method classifiable in class 426.

The inventions are distinct each from the other because the manifold of Group I could be used in apparatus other than the packaging apparatus of Group II. For example, it could be used in an inline mixing system that forms a product that is not immediately packaged but could be first further processed or placed into holding tanks. The manifold of Group I could also be used in non-edible processing as opposed to Group III. Similarly, the apparatus of Group II could be used in processes other than that of Group III; for example, to process non-food materials.

Because these inventions are the distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art requiring separate searches as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

Any inquiry concerning this communication from the examiner should be directed to Steven Weinstein whose telephone number is (703) 308-0650. The examiner can generally be reached on Monday-Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on (703) 308-3959. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.

S. Weinstein/dh
August 15, 2003

Steve Weinstein
STEVE WEINSTEIN
PRIMARY EXAMINER 1761
8/20/03